

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Office Action of September 23, 2004.

Regarding paragraph 1 of Office Action, certain objections were raised regarding component numbering. In reviewing the specification and drawings, Applicant noted that a sequence of numbers were repeated. The replacement sheets and the amendment to the specification correct such error and are believed to overcome the objections.

Claims 1 and 2 are allowed. Claims 5 through 10 (and presumably 11) were deemed allowable is written in independent form. Claim 3 has been amended to include the subject matter of original dependent claims 4 and 5 and should thus be allowable. Claims 4 and 5 have been cancelled. Claims 6 through 11 depend directly or indirectly from amended claim 3 and should also be allowable.

Newly presented claim 12 is an independent claim based on original claim 3 and claim 8. The claim recites the pivotal mounting of the guide plates and the spring means allowing deflection to accommodate turns. This structure is not taught nor suggested by the cited Schmiesing or Smith references. Schmiesing has not structure for alignment. Smith has fixed transversely angled plates inclined with respect to horizontal axes. These in now way would function for providing a normal aligning pocket and deflecting for turning. It is submitted that claim 12 recites patentable novelty over the references and allowance is respectfully solicited.

Claim 13, newly presented, recites an important and novel aspect of the invention: the provision of a latching hitch assembly that is directly mountable on existing aircraft tug hitches, thereby enabling ready adaptation. The claim specifically recites the combination of the hitch

assembly, the aircraft tug and the upper and lower apertured plates of existing hitches. It also recites the guide plates and orientation to define a receiving pocket. Such a combination is not taught or suggested by the cited references. The Smith reference is top mounted on a draw bar 2 of a tractor (column 1, line 68 et seq.), not at the existing hitch plates of an aircraft tug. The Schmiesing incorporates the latching mechanism on the towed vehicle, not the towing vehicle. Accordingly, it provides no guidance for mounting the Smith latching mechanism directly on the recited plates an airport tug hitch. Further, as noted above, Smith has transversely inclined plates providing vertical, not lateral, centering of the tow bar. It is submitted that the combination set forth in Claim 13, is neither taught nor suggested by these references, alone or in combination, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that allowed and conditionally allowed claims 1-3, and 5-11, and newly presented claims 12 and 13 are allowable and notification thereof is respectfully solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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